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Message Text

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R 150330Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO USICA WASHDC
SECSTATE WASHDC 9550
INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
471?1$/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 7505

C O N FPTUT E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 KABUL 6566

EO 11652: GDS
SUBJ: AFGHAN PRESS ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

REF: 1) KABUL 5045, 2) KABUL 6251, 3) KABUL 6422

SUMMARY: ANTI-WEST AFGHAN MEDIA THEMES WHICH EMERGED IN JULY CAST REAL DOUBT ON GOVT'S STATED NONALIGNMENT. (ALL AFGHAN MEDIA ARE GOVT CONTROLLED.) LOCAL LANGUAGE PAPERS WERE OPENLY IDEOLOGICAL IN TREATMENT OF WESTERN FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES IN AFRICA, MIDDLE EAST AND ON SUBJECTS OF DISARMAMEMT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF LDCS. PRESS PARROTED MANY SOVIET VIEWS AND REGULARLY ATTACKED "NEO-COLONIALISTS" AND "IMPERIALISTS", TAKING STANCE THAT NONALIGNED NATIONS MUST SIDE WITH "SOCIALIST, PEACE-LOVING AND PROGRESSIVE NATIONS." ALL PAPERS CONTINUED CARRY REGIME'S REVOLUTIONARY MESSAGE, BUT SHOWED MORE BALANCE IN REPORTING IN-COUNTRY ACTIVITIES OF FOREIGN MISSIONS. GOVT INITIATED NEW WEEKLY PAPER IN THE UZBEK LANGUAGE TO REACH AN IMPORTANT MINORITY. RADIO INCREASED MULTI-LINGUAL BROADCASTS TO REACH LARGELY ILLITERATE RURAL MASSES. AMBASSY/ICA OFFICERS MAINTAINED FRIENDLY CONTACT WITH LEADING MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES. END SUMMARY.
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1. DESPITE REPEATED PROFESSIONS OF NONALIGNMENT BY GOVT OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF AFGHANISTAN (DRA), A MARKED ANTI-WEST SLANT EMERGED IN THE MEDIA DURING JULY. WHILE CARE TAKEN TO AVOID NAMING U.S. OUTRIGHT, NEWSPAPERS, ESPECIALLY LARGEST CIRCULATING DAILY DARI LANGUAGE ANIS, HAMMERED AWAY AT "COLONIALISTS" AND "IMPERIALISTS", ATTACKING WESTERN FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES IN

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AFRICA, MIDDLE EAST, AND PARROTTING SOVIET VIEWS ON DISARMAMENT. VOCABULARY WAS TRANSPARENTLY IDEOLOGICAL, AND SIMILAR IN TONE TO SOVIET PUBLICATIONS AS EXEMPLIFIED BY SOVIET EMBASSY NEWS BULLETIN AND NOVOSTI RELEASES. EXCERPTS FROM FOREIGN MINISTER AMIN'S REMARKS AT BELGRADE NAM CONFERENCE, CARRIED IN KABUL TIMES JULY 30 AND 31, ARE ILLUSTRATIVE. REGARDING INDIAN OCEAN AS ZONE OF PEACE AMIN STATED QUOTE THE REALIZATION OF THIS OBJECTIVE REQUIRES THE IMMEDIATE TERMINATION OF MILITARY BASES IN THE INDIAN OCEAN, INCLUDING DIEGO GARCIA... END QUOTE. LIKEWISE HE CALLED FOR QUOTE THE IMMEDIATE WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FOREIGN FORCES FROM KOREA, INCLUDING THE DISMANTLING OF ALL MILITARY INSTALLATIONS IN SOUTH KOREA. END QUOTE. WITH REGARD TO THE NONALIGNED MOVEMENT AMIN STRESSED THAT QUOTE WE MUST BE VIGILANT OF THE CONSPIRACIES BY THE ENEMIES OF NONALIGNMENT FOR TRYING TO DESTROY COOPERATION BE-TWEEN NONALIGNED COUNTRIES AND THEIR REAL AND NATURAL FRIENDS, THE SOCIALIST AND PEACE-LOVING COUNTRIES END QUOTE. FINALLY AMIN'S REMARKS CONCERNING ECONOMIC AID AND DEVELOPMENT OF LDCS LEAVE LITTLE DOUBT AS TO DRA AND ITS CONTROLLED MEDIA'S CONCEPT OF NONALIGNMENT. AMIN SAYS QUOTE SOCIALIST COUNTRIES CANNOT BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ECONOMIC BACKWARDNESS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FOR THEY HAVE NEVER ATTEMPTED IN (SIC) EXPLOITATION BUT HAVE PROVED THEMSELVES ACTIVE PARTNERS OF PROGRESS AND DEVELOPMENT. THE CAUSE OF ECONOMIC BACKWARDNESS OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FALL (SIC) SQUARELY ON THE SHOULDERS OF COLONIALISM AND IMPERIALISM... END QUOTE.

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2. LOCAL LANGUAGE PRESS, WITH ANIS IN LEAD, ESPOUSES STRONG PRO-SOVIET IDEOLOGICAL STANCE ON MAJOR INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. ENGLISH LANGUAGE KABUL TIMES DEMONSTRATES SLIGHTLY MORE MODERATE POLICY BUT OFTEN REPRINTS ARTICLES FROM ANIS AND HEWAD ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. SURVEY OF MAJOR INTERNATIONAL SUBJECTS TREATED IN LOCAL LANGUAGE PAPERS JULY 1-AUGUST 1 SHOWS SUBSTANTIAL DUPLICATION OF ITEM S
IN DARI LANGUAGE ANIS AND PASHTU LANGUAGE HEWAD WITH FRONT AND BACK PAGE NEWS ESSENTIALLY IDENTICAL. ANIS COVERS MORE COMMENTARY OF FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES. DURING MONTH-LONG PERIOD ANIS, HEWAD AND WEEKLY ZHOWANDOOON PUBLISHED SUBSTANTIAL COMMENTARIES AS FOLLOWS: NONALIGNMENT - ONE ITEM, PLUS FONMIN BELGRADE SPEECH TEXT; AFRICA - FIVE ITEMS; MIDDLE EAST/ISRAEL - SIX ITEMS; DISARMAMENT - FIVE ITEMS; NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE - ONE ITEM; COLONIALISM/IMPERIALISM - FIVE ITEMS; AND CAPITALISM VERSUS SOCIALISM - TWO ITEMS; AND CAPITALISM VERSUS SOCIALISM - TWO ITEMS. THESE ITEMS ARE GENERALLY SIGNED BY AFGHAN JOURNALISTS OR GOVT OFFICIALS. SOME ITEMS APPEARED IN MORE THAN ONE PAPER. ALL THREE PAPERS CARRIED SMATTERING OF ITEMS FROM VARIETY OF FOREIGN NEWSPAPERS ON SAME TOPICS. ATTRIBUTION CONSISTENTLY GIVEN TO SOURCE, PREDOMINANTLY EAST EUROPEAN AND SOVIET NEWS MEDIA. A FEW ITEMS WERE TRANSLATED FROM WESTERN PRESS SOURCES SUCH AS THE WASHINGTON POST, TIME, AND THE

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GUARDIAN; THEY REFLECTED CRITICISM OF WESTERN POLICIES ON TOPICS
SUCH AS DISARMAMENT, NEUTRON BOMB, AFRICA, AND ARMS SUPPLY FOR
MIDDLE EAST.

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SS-15 SES-02 SAA-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12 IO-13
HA-05 EB-08 COME-00 AID-05 OES-09 /131 W
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R 150330Z AUG 78
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INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

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3. REGARDING EVENTS IN AFRICA, ANIS CONSISTENTLY CASTIGATED
"NEO-COLONIALIST" MOVEMENTS AGAINST FREEDOM STRUGGLES IN RHODESIA,
ZAIRE/ANGOLA, NAMIBIA AND THE HORN OF AFRICA. SOME EXAMPLES: ANIS,
JULY 12, STATED QUOTE THE WORLD REACTIONARY FORCES,
IN ORDER TO MAR THE REPUTATION OF FREEDOM MOVEMENTS, ARE TRYING TO
MAKE OUT AS IF THESE MOVEMENTS ARE DIRECTED BY "OTHERS" AND ARE
UNDER THE "INFLUENCE" OF OTHERS...RECENTLY OPEN AGRESSION WAS
COMMITTED IN THE SHABA PROVINCE OF ZAIRE AND COLONIAL FORCES ARE
HELPING THE RACIALISTS IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF AFRICA. BUT WHEN
THE PROGRESSIVE FORCES RENDER ANY ASSISTANCE FOR THE FREEDOM OF PEOPL
E
IN ZIMBABWE AND NAMIBIA, THE COLONIAL CIRCLES RAISE THEIR VOICES
IN PROTEST. END QUOTE. ZHOWANDOON, A WEEKLY, DARI LANGUAGE MAGAZINE,
UNDER EDITORIAL CONTROL OF ANIS, ATTACKED THE WEST ON THE SUBJECTS
OF DETENTE AND COLONIALISM IN ITS JULY 1 ISSUE IN A LENGTHY
ARTICLE ENTITLED QUOTE DETENTE -- THE MOST URGENT OF TIME END QUOTE.
IN JULY 17 EDIT PAGE ARTICLE ANIS CONTINUED DIATRIBE AGAINST WEST
STATING QUOTE NOW THAT THE TEMPESTUOUS WAVES OF LIBERATION
MOVEMENTS ARE RAPIDLY PROGRESSING IN ASIAN, AFRICAN AND LATIN
AMERICAN COUNTRIES, DELIVERING HEAVY BLOWS TO WORLD DESPOTISM AND
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RESIDENTS OF SKYSCRAPERS, INTERNATIONAL REACTION HAS ONCE AGAIN RESORTED TO INTENSIGYING ITS PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN AGAINST THESE MOVEMENTS...TURNING OVER THE PAGES OF NEWSPAPERS OR TUNING IN TO NEWSCASTS BY INTERNATIONAL REACTION ONE CAN HARDLY FAIL TO READ AND LISTEN TO A BARRAGE OF POISONOUS PROPAGANDA AIMED AT CREATING A MENTAL AND PSYCOLOGICAL BARRIER AGAINST SPREAD OF PROGRESSIVE IDEAS IN COUNTRIES WHERE PEOPLE HAVE NOT YET REACHED THE STAGE OF POLITICAL MATURITY. END QUOTE. IN JULY 28 ISSUE OF HEWAD, OFTEN MORE MODERATE PASHTU DAILY, SUBJECT OF ARMS RACE RECEIVED SPECIAL TREATMENT IN ARTICLE ENTITLED QUOTE INTENSIFICATION OF ARMS RACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. END QUOTE. QUOTE THE WESTERN COUNTRIES SUPPLY ABOUT 80 PERCENT OF ARMS TO THE MIDDLW EAST COUNTRIES. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST WOULD MEAN LOSS OF REVENUE TO THE WESTERN DEALERS OF ARMS. END QUOTE. OCCASIONALLY, U.S. WAS MORE CLEARLY THE TARGET. JULY 26 ARTICLE IN ANIS ENTITLED QUOTE THE INNER REALITIES OF THE SOCIETY WHICH BUILDS THE NEUTRON BOMB, END QUOTE, IS EXAMPLE. AFTER BRIEF INTRODUCTION DEPICTING DICHOTOMY BETWEEN HUMANE APPLICATIONS OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN PROGRESSIVE, PEACE-LOVING PART OF WORLD AND IN CAPITALIST-RULED PART OF WORLD, ARTICLE FOCUSES ON ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF ARMS RACE. QUOTE THE THIRST FOR SURPLUS VALUE IS SO GREAT THAT THE CAPITALISTS ARE PRODUCING ARMS AND MEANS OF MASS ANNIHILATION IN ORDER TO POCKET HUGE PROFITS. RIGHT NOW THE CAPITALISTS ARE MADLY TRYING TO CONVINCE THE PUBLIC OPINION ABOUT THE NEED FOR THE PRODUCTION OF NEUTRON BOMB... THEY ARE TRYING TO CONVINCE THEIR OWN PEOPLE AND THE WORLD THAT A BOMB WHICH KILLS HUMAN BEINGS BUT LEAVES THE PROPERTY UNHARMED IS ESSENTIAL FOR WESTERN MILITARY ALLIANCES. END QUOTE.

4. THE ITEMS CITED ABOVE ILLUSTRATE THE LESS THAN NONALIGNED ORIENTATION OF LOCAL LANGUAGE PRESS TO MAJOR INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. MAJORITY OF NEWS CARRIED CONCERNS DOMESTIC MATTERS AND IS FILLED WITH REVOLUTIONARY DOGMA. CIRCULATION OF DARI AND PASHTU LANGUAGE PRESS IS SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER THAN THAT OF SINGLE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

DAILY KABUL TIMES. WITH MINISCULE AUDIENCE OF FEW THOUSAND, CONCEN-TRATED IN KABUL, KABUL TIMES CARRIES SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT MENU OF PRESS ITEMS, PRESENTING A LESS LEFTIST APPEARANCE TO FOREIGN DIPLOMATS. LIKE OTHER PAPERS IT CONCENTRATES FRONT AND BACK PAGES ON GOVT POLICIES, MEETINGS, RALLIES AND SPEECHES BY LEADING DRA OFFICIALS. UNLIKE ANIS AND HEWAD IT DEVOTES CONSIDERABLY LESS SPACE TO IDEOLOGICAL DIATRIBE. IT DOES, ON OCCASION, CARRY PARTIAL OR FULL TEXTS OF SPEECHES BY PRIME MINISTER, FOREIGN MINISTER AND OTHER CABINET MEMBERS SUCH AS FONMIN AMIN'S SPEECH EXCERPTED ABOVE. IN RECENT WEEKS, KABUL TIMES HAS INCREASED QUANTITY OF FOREIGN SOURCE NEWS, CITING WIRE SERVICES AND OTHER SOURCES.

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ITEMS GENERALLY COVER INNOCUOUS SUBJECTS WITH LITTLE POLITICAL CONTENT. SOME EXAMPLES FROM THE PAST FOUR WEEKS: JULH 3 -- QUOTE SUDANESE CANAL SCHEME TO TAME THE NILE UNQUOTE BY WORLD FEATURES SYNDICATE (WFS); JULY 8 -- QUOTE AFRICA REFUGEE SITUATION WORST SINCE WORLD WAR II UNQUOTE BY WFS; JULY 11 -- QUOTE BULGARIANS BREED NEW HYBRID TOMATO STRAINS UNQUOTE FROM BULGARIAN SOURCES; JULY 16 -- QUOTE WORLD EXPERTS DISCUSS SALT TECHNOLOGY UNQUOTE (CONCERN MINING); JULY 19 -- QUOTE GLOBAL VILLAGE CONCEPT EDGING NEARER TO REALITY UNQUOTE AND QUOTE JAPAN ANNOUNCES MASSIVE INCREASE IN TRADE SURPLUS UNQUOTE, BOTH REUTER DISPATCHES; JULY 20 -- UNATTRIBUTED EDIT PAGE ITEM ENTITLED QUOTE MANDELA STILL LANGUISHING IN PRETORIA'S JAIL UNQUOTE; JULY 24 -- QUOTE PRE-HISTORIC ART FOUND ON REMOTE AUSTRALIAN CLIFF UNQUOTE, CITING AUSTRALIAN SOURCES. NONE OF THE ABOVE WERE CARRIED IN LOCAL LANGUAGE PRESS. WEEKLY DARI LANGUAGE MAGAZINE ZHOWANDOON DIFFERS FROM LOCAL LANGUAGE DAILIES IN CARRYING SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER FOREIGN SOURCE ITEMS ON VARIETY OF SUBJECTS, ESPECIALLY HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION.

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO USICA WASHDC
SECSTATE WASHDC 9552
INFO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

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5. NEW DEVELOPMENT IS APPEARANCE MID-KULY OF WEEKLY NEWSPAPER IN THE UZBEK LANGUAGE. (THE REGIME HAS ALSO PROMISED TO PUBLISH JOURNALS IN OTHER MINORITY LANGUAGES). CONTENT OF THESE LIMITED-CIRCULATION WEEKLIES IS ALMOST ENTIRELY DOMESTIC NEWS AND DRA PROCLAMATIONS. THEIR PUBLICATION IS A COMPONENT OF THE ANNOUNCED DRA NATIONALITIES POLICY, AND PROVIDES MEANS FOR GOVT TO REACH UZBEK AND TADJIK MINORITIES WITH REVOLUTIONARY MESSAGE ON

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REGULAR BASIS. THIS EFFORT ALSO SUPPORTED BY INCREASED MULTI-
LINGUAL PROGRAMMING BY AFGHAN RADIO, DRA'S MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS FOR
REACHING LARGELY ILLITERATE POPULATION.

6. DESPITE TONE OF PRESS, PERSONAL RELATIONS OF POST OFFICERS WITH
MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES HAVE DEVELOPED WELL. RECENT PAO LUNCHEON
TO INTRODUCE AMBASSADOR TO LEADING MEDIA AND MINISTRY OF
INFORMATION OFFICIALS, PRODUCED NEARLY 100 PERCENT TURNOUT.
PLACEMENT OF ICA ITEMS PICKED UP NOTABLY IN JULY. COVERAGE
OF MISSION ACTIVITIES HAS BEEN GOOD, SUGGESTING DRA POLICY OF
BALANCED REPORTING FOREIGN GOVT'S ACTIVITIES. EXAMPLES ARE
FRIENDLY LEAD EDITS IN THREE MAJOR DAILIES ON U.S. INDEPENDENCE
DAY; COVERAGE OF VISIT BY DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE DAVID NEWSOM;
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STORIES ON DRA DECISION TO PURCHASE MCDONNELL-DOUGLAS DC-10, ON
PRESENTATION USG $25 THOUSAND CHECK FOR EMERGENCY FLOOD RELIEF,
AND ON SIGNING OF $3.2 MILLION AGREEMENT BETWEEN USAID AND DRA FOR
CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF HELMAND VALLEY IRRIGATION PROJECT.

7. NEVERTHELESS, A DISTINCTLY MORE ANTI-WEST TREND IN THE GOVT-
CONTROLLED MEDIA EMERGED DURING JULY. WHETHER THIS TREND WILL CONTINU
E
OR EVEN ACCELERATE IN COMING MONTHS REMAINS TO BE SEEN, BUT
OFFICIAL POSITIONS REFLECTED IN AMIN'S BELGRADE SPEECH AS WELL AS IN
A SERIES OF ADDRESSES BY PRIME MINISTER TARAKI (KABUL 6422) ARE
NOT OVERLY REASSURING.
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Status: NATIVE
Subject: AFGHAN PRESS ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
TAGS: SOPN, PROP, AF
To: ICA STATE
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